Claim Amendments

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claim 1 (previously presented): A method for guiding sheets to a sheet processing machine, which comprises the step of:

generating an overlapping stream of sheets guided over a table in a sheet transport direction;

reducing an adhesion force between two sheets following one another in the overlapping stream by lifting a sheet trailing edge of a first sheet with a blown air jet from a first nozzle aimed in the sheet transport direction blown out substantially tangentially over the first sheet; and

lifting the sheet trailing edge of the first sheet by blowing under the sheet from behind the sheet with a second nozzle spaced apart from the first nozzle in the transport direction.

Claim 2 (cancelled).

Claim 3 (previously presented): The method according to claim 1, which further comprises aligning the first sheet in the sheet transport direction before the sheet trailing edge of the first sheet is lifted.

Claim 4 (original): The method according to claim 3, which further comprises aligning the first sheet laterally at a same time as the sheet trailing edge of the first sheet is lifted.

Claim 5 (original): The method according to claim 3, which further comprises aligning the first sheet laterally after the sheet trailing edge of the first sheet has been lifted.

Claim 6 (previously presented): An apparatus for guiding sheets to a sheet processing machine, the apparatus comprising:

a lifting device for reducing an adhesion force between two sheets following one another in an overlapping stream by lifting a sheet trailing edge of a first sheet, said lifting device disposed above the first sheet of the overlapping stream, said lifting device including at least one nozzle with an air jet aimed in a sheet transport direction substantially tangentially over the first sheet of the overlapping stream, and said lifting device having a free jet nozzle in addition

to said nozzle, said free jet nozzle being disposed upstream of said at least one nozzle in the sheet transport direction, and said free jet nozzle being aimed at the overlapping sheet stream obliquely from above in the sheet transport direction.

Claim 7 (original): The apparatus according to claim 6, further comprising a front edge alignment device, said lifting device being disposed at a distance of a sheet length to be processed from said front edge alignment device.

Claim 8 (previously presented): The apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said lifting device can be adjusted in the sheet transport direction to a sheet format to be processed.

Claims 9-11 (cancelled).

Claim 12 (previously presented): The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said nozzle is formed as a blowing/suction nozzle and can be acted on with blown air.

Claim 13 (original): The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said nozzle is formed as a suction gripper and can be acted on with a vacuum.

Claim 14 (cancelled).

Claim 15 (previously presented): The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein at least one of said nozzle and said free jet nozzle can be activated at a cycle rate of the sheet processing machine.

Claim 16 (currently amended): A printing press, comprising:

a sheet stack feeder;

a first lifting apparatus for forming an overlapping stream and disposed adjacent said sheet stack feeder; and

a second lifting apparatus for reducing an adhesion force between two sheets following one another in an overlapping stream by lifting a sheet trailing edge of a first sheet, said second lifting apparatus disposed above [[a]] the first sheet of the overlapping stream and downstream of said first lifting apparatus in a sheet transport direction, said second lifting apparatus ~~being~~ including at least one nozzle with an air jet aimed in the sheet transport direction substantially tangentially over the first sheet of the overlapping stream, ~~said second lifting apparatus having at least one nozzle,~~ and said second lifting apparatus having a free jet nozzle in addition to said nozzle, said free jet nozzle being disposed

upstream of said at least one nozzle in the sheet transport direction, and said free jet nozzle being aimed at the overlapping sheet stream obliquely from above in the sheet transport direction.

Claim 17 (previously presented): The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said nozzle and said free jet nozzle are spaced apart from each other in the sheet transport direction.